

WITH THE FARMERS

By Prof. W. F. MASSEY

Wednesday, February 11, 1914.

Growing Radishes and Onions.
Eastern North Carolina: "What variety of radishes is best to grow for shipping, and when should the seed be sown?" I want to grow onion sets for sale. Please tell me what variety to plant and how to row them. Where can I get French W. F. Massey's articles?

I am sowing radishes now in frames under double glazed sashes. These will come off in February. If you want to grow radishes in the open ground, sow seed of the Scarlet turnip variety or the White Tipped Scarlet turnip root. Sow as early in February as you can work the land in good order. Sow in very heavy fertilizer beds six feet wide, and make the rows ten inches apart. Onion seed to make sets are planted in the same way in soil of moderate fertility. Early April is the best time to sow the seed very thickly, taking about sixty pounds of seed an acre. For white sets the Pearl is good, and for yellow ones the Yellow Globe Danvers. You can get French radish plants from most of the leading seedsmen and can get the seed from any seedman. It takes two years to make the radish blossoms that are used when seed are used.

Spraying With Lime-Sulphur.
According to your suggestions, I have sprayed my peach trees with the lime-sulphur wash. Is it possible to spray the tops too much before the buds swell? I want to make sure of keeping the San Jose scale down. After the leaves are out, I want to spray the leaves with lime-sulphur. I have some peach trees that are wormy, and some dry up on the tree. Would like to know how to keep off these other pests? You can use the lime-sulphur wash on the leaves while the trees are dormant. In spring you can use the self-bolled lime-sulphur without damage, and it will prevent the leaf curl and help to keep down the scale. The lime-sulphur article cannot be used after the leaves are out. The only way to get at the wormy peaches is to jar the trees daily and gather up and destroy them and the curculio that causes the trouble. Spraying with the self-bolled lime-sulphur will have some effect on the peach rot, but it is hard to control this.

Destroying Cut Worms.
Please tell me where to get ground tobacco stems, and the amount needed to keep down cut worms. Will use commercial fertilizer, and the tobacco will be good thing for the furrow for cotton or corn to prevent root lice. The best thing for cut worms is a mixture of one part Paris green to five parts of water, make slightly damp and the poison will mix in it. Scatter this around plants liable to be attacked by cut worms and they will eat it and die. You can get tobacco stems from any factory in Richmond, I suppose.

More About Limestone.
I have read what you say about lime and limestone. Would it not pay to use the long run to get good rock, ground oyster shells, provided you could put down three tons at cost of one ton of burnt lime, and would not the raw material last longer in the soil? I am getting into the lime business. I have twenty acres that I wish to put into a permanent pasture, sowing the seed this spring. What would you use? It has some red top on it, and it seems to thrive. For a permanent pasture use mainly orchard grass, and with it mix some bluegrass seed. In your section I would make the mixture ten pounds of orchard grass, ten pounds of tall fescue, and ten pounds of bluegrass, as some call it, while others call it English bluegrass (Poa compressa). This will do better with you than the Kentucky bluegrass. Let the sod get strong before pasturing to much extent. You can put on the land in preparing for the grass all the ground limestone you please. It may have some effect in sweetening the soil if it is acid. But if you can lay down one ton of burnt lime at same price as three tons of the ground stone, you can make the burnt lime and more than double it in volume, and I had rather have 1,000 pounds of this slaked lime than a ton of the ground rock.

Potatoes and Peas.
Mathews: "I want to plant about 150 barrels of Irish potatoes this spring, and some English peas, and will appreciate some advice in regard to the best varieties. The Irish Cobbler has been grown around here, but there is a great deal of complaint of mixture with other sorts. What do you think best for the early market, potatoes or peas? What is the best brand of fertilizer for potatoes and peas? I have to buy my fertilizer ready mixed from an agent. They have a lot of different brands, and I would like to know what brand will be best, as I know nothing about analysis. When is the best time to plant the potatoes and peas? Is February too early, and will potato seed raised from cold storage potatoes planted last August be just as good as buying this spring? I have several barrels of these, grown last fall. Will they be good and early?" There is no better early potato than the Irish Cobbler, provided you get pure stock, and it will pay you to be sure that you get these, even at an advanced price. The late crop grown last fall will make good seed to plant this spring. They are not so sweet as the starting from Northern seed, but will do on about as soon. No one can tell you whether potatoes or peas will be more profitable, for there is nothing more uncertain than the market for early vegetable crops from season to season. I do not know anything about the brands of fertilizers you can get, and it is poor practice to buy by brand name without knowing what the article contains. A fertilizer for early potatoes should have a fair percentage of nitrogen, or ammonia, as they put it on the racks, and good percentage of phosphoric acid and a liberal percentage of potash. In planting a large crop of 150 barrels, it will pay you well to mix your own fertilizer.

You can buy the materials and mix your fertilizer of a high grade, cheaper than you can get a similar mixture ready made. For potatoes, a mixture of 900 pounds acid phosphate, 100 pounds of nitrate of soda, 600 pounds of fish scrap, 400 pounds of muriatic potash to make a ton, will make a good potato fertilizer and better than most of the brands advertised for potatoes. Use of this 1,000 to 1,500 pounds an acre in the furrow, and mix it well with a soil. For peas, use 500 pounds of acid phosphate, fifty pounds of nitrate of

soda and fifty pounds of muriatic of potash an acre. You are a young farmer and should study the matter of plant food in fertilizers and learn to buy according to the plant food in the article rather than the brand name. You cannot afford to use a low-grade fertilizer, with a lot of filler in it for truck crops, but need one that has no filler, but what naturally belongs in the material. Please send me a copy of the book you can work the soil in good order. If in January, and use the Alaska plan. Plant potatoes as early in February as the soil is in good condition, but do not work a wet soil. You can get good seed in Norfolk of both peas and potatoes.

Planting Pecans.
"Have two acres of clay loam, on which I am thinking of putting pecan trees. Kindly give your opinion as to the advisability of this and state method of planting and distance apart, best varieties, and whether seedlings or budded plants should be used?" If you expect to make the plantation as a commercial matter, I will say that I have very little faith in the craze for planting pecans. For home use a few trees may be desirable. You should get into trees, of course, for the seedlings may be good, but for more probably poor. Stuart and Van Deman are good varieties, and almost any Southern nurseryman can furnish the seed. The trees are not so hard to plant as you think. They make a few nuts in about sixteen years. When all the pecan trees that have been planted in the South during the past twenty years all get into bearing, I hardly think the market price for the nuts will be profitable.

Forma of Phosphoric Acid.
"I have a great deal of my land in oats and clover to cut for hay and follow with corn. What is the best kind of phosphate to use on the corn, Thomas or acid phosphate?" If your land has not been limed in late years, it will pay best to use the Thomas phosphate liberally, since it carries from 40 to 60 per cent of free lime, and will, to that extent, tend to sweeten your soil. But I notice that you ask which of these to apply before plowing the land? I would say neither, but plow first and harrow in the fertilizer afterwards.

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